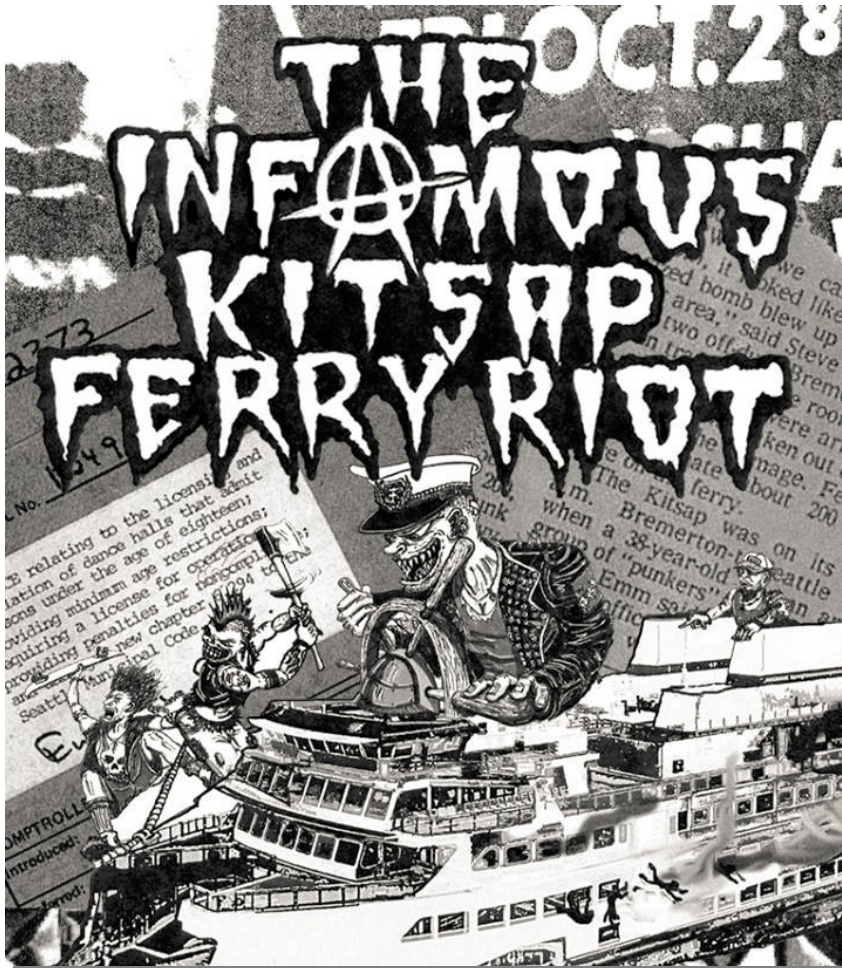


# THE KITSAP FERRY RIOT



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All age music and dance clubs were really cool places to hang out if you were a rocker, punk, waver or bat caver. Other than house parties, which always got busted, where could alternative youth gather?

There were a few places. Gorilla Gardens, an old gutted out movie theater with two showrooms, held both metal and punk rock shows. The Monastery was a dark, brooding gothic building (run by Universal Life Church) with a rave going on every night disguised as a church service. These places tend to draw some unsavory characters and after awhile, the word got out that there were drinking, drugs and other unsavory things going on.



Because these were all ages clubs there were a mix of people, young and old, which led to some very upset and concerned parents. The Teen



Dance Ordinance of 1985 was quickly written

and passed by Seattle City Council after parents complained that teenagers were being exposed to a host of unsafe conditions at these 'havens for runaways and perverts.'

The Ordinance, which was meant to protect teenagers, actually punished them by shutting down gathering spaces for anyone younger than 21. Not backing down, Seattle's all-ages crowd tested the Teen Dance Ordinance by holding sporadic shows in Seattle. Unfortunately the TDO allowed



skateboard and handed him the fire axe. Everyone got out of the way as he began chopping at the door with the axe. All the punks began yelling "Kill the Cops!" and "Kill! Kill! Kill!" Needless to say the police were scared. Inside, they had their guns drawn, pointed at the door in case it flew open.

45 minutes into the hour-long ferry ride to Seattle, a lot of rioters got bored and went back to their cars. But a few troublemakers kept busy knocking out ceiling tiles and knocking over pop machines and video games, doing approximately \$50,000 dollars in damage. Seattle Police were waiting at the dock, and after unloading each car single file, five people had been arrested and were taken back to Kitsap County Jail for a weekend stay.

*Text borrowed from the deleted website for The Infamous Kitsap Ferry Riot, a documentary by Chris Loomey on this event, still accessible at <https://web.archive.org/web/20210507140541/https://www.infamouskitsapferryriot.com/about/>*



go. Fearing an altercation, the ferry workers closed and locked the door.

This threw the crowd into panic mode. The angry crowd of punks

beat on the door, while the kid inside yelled for help.

That's when two off duty policemen arrived on scene from upstairs. The situation spiraled out of control as pissed off punks yelled

and spit at the off duty cops. The police arrested one kid who spat on them, taking him into the same room as the other kid. The angry punks were now raging and the police started to fear for their safety. The policemen had no choice but to barricade themselves inside the small room.

A guy was pepper sprayed by police, through a vent in the door, as he pleaded for them to set his friend free. While stumbling around in pain, someone broke out the emergency glass with a



Seattle Police to exercise force, which basically meant using violence if necessary. A bloody riot happened after the final show at Gorilla Gardens was shut down by the fire dept on a snowy thanksgiving weekend night in 1985. Police demanded the teens leave the area, but snow made it difficult. Seattle Police decided they weren't dispersing quickly enough and began roughing them up. Other kids across the street began to throw snowballs at the police as paddy wagons and more police cars pulled up. As policemen were throwing kids into the paddy wagon, some other kids found a truck full of bricks. Soon, brick-filled snowballs were being hurled at police.

The disturbance made the local news. One station reported the story as it happened and even interviewed a few kids that had been hurt. The other station aired a scathing commentary on "punk rockers and their drug-taking antics." Suggesting "they might want to spend time doing more important things, like reading and learning."

## ***And one wonders why there was an Infamous Kitsap Ferry Riot?***

Let's go forward two years.

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Friday, October 2nd 1987 a riot occurred aboard the M/V Kitsap on the way back from a punk rock show in Bremerton, Washington. Local 'splatter rock' heroes The Accused and British hardcore group GBH were in town for their 'Panic in the Casket' Tour. It was a homecoming of sorts, everyone was excited, punks from all over Puget Sound went to this show.

The Teen Dance Ordinance of 1985 was in full effect within Seattle City Limits, and the show was held at Natascha's in Bremerton, an hours ferry ride away from Seattle.

After the big show, as everyone headed back to Seattle aboard the M/V Kitsap, ferry workers were on high alert when they saw the massive crowd of punks. Then an argument broke out between a woman and a few teenagers on the passenger deck. They were just joking with each other, but the



situation escalated and got out of control. By now, a large group of rowdy concertgoers had gathered on the passenger deck, and ferry workers were starting to get worried.

Two off duty Bremerton Police noticed the



potential problems and went up to talk to the Captain, while a couple of ferry workers seemingly took matters into their own hands. One kid was exposing himself, urinating in the passenger area while the woman performed a drunken strip-tease for the crowd. Everyone was laughing and carrying on when one of the ferry workers apprehended the kid and took him

into a small room. Suddenly it wasn't funny anymore. The crowd of angry kids surrounded the door, yelling at the ferry workers to let him

